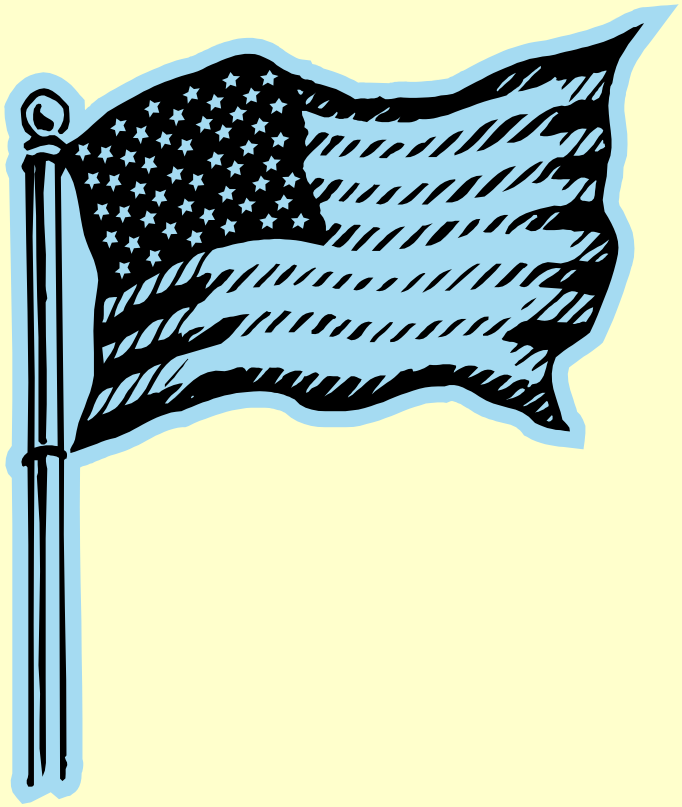
ESCORT BRIEF

16 July 2004

US ARMY MEMORIAL AFFAIRS ACTIVITY - EUROPE

Selection of Escorts



An Escort Shall Be

- Neat in appearance. Military escorts will not have medical profiles restricting wear of uniform or waiving personal appearance standards.
- Of good character.
- Sober and drug free
- Tactful in speech and pleasant in personality.

An Escort Shall Be

- Capable of taking appropriate action in an emergency.
- Of the same branch of service.
- Of a grade at least equal to that of the decedent.
- From the same unit when practicable.
- Able to speak the language spoken by the Person Authorizing Disposition.

Duties and responsibilities

Your Mission

- Your mission as an escort is to ensure that the deceased soldier’s remains are safeguarded and properly moved from the time of release from the preparing mortuary until delivery to the receiving funeral home selected by the Person Authorized to Direct Disposition (PADD).

Importance of this Assignment

- I’d like to emphasize the importance of this assignment, and the requirement that you maintain the highest standards of conduct and courtesy, including neatness of appearance and sobriety. You will not discuss the purpose of your travel with anyone other than the carrier’s agents and representatives. Furthermore, you will not discuss with anyone rumors, speculation, or circumstances of the incident surrounding the death of the soldier.

Transportation

- As an escort, you will be issued a Government Transportation Request (GTR) and itinerary to your final destination prior to leaving this installation. These documents authorize transportation by common carrier for you and the deceased, and your return trip to your duty station.
- Upon completion of this mission you will return to your duty station using the mode of transportation that has been arranged by the CAC. You **may or may not be** authorized a rental car. That decision will be based on how far the receiving mortuary is from the airport.

Checking In

- Give the airline check in counter your blue GTR (Government Travel Request) and your ID card. The airline will issue your ticket. **Make sure that the itinerary on the ticket is the same as that on your information sheet.** Please tell check-in personnel that you are the escort for deceased human remains.

Witnessing the loading of the remains onto the aircraft

Witnessing the loading of the remains onto the aircraft

- When you reach the boarding area, again tell the airline representative there, you are the escort for the remains of a deceased soldier and you would like to witness the on loading of the remains into the aircraft. If they concur, you will be taken downstairs to witness the on loading or view from a window in the departure area. Be sure the air tray is the correct way (remains are always loaded into the aircraft headfirst so when they are off loaded, they will be off loaded feet first. At all other times, remains are moved feet first). Remember to render the hand salute as the remains are loaded on or off the aircraft.

In Case of a Delay

- Should there be a change in your flight schedule of two or more hours, you must call the receiving funeral director and the shipping CAC to inform them of the change. You are authorized on your travel orders to make official telephone calls in the event you require to communicate your status. If you will be detained overnight or should some other emergency arise, you will call the receiving CAC, the shipping CAC, the receiving funeral director, and CMAOC to advise them of the situation.

Once on board the aircraft

- When you board the aircraft, please advise the flight attendant that you are the escort for remains aboard that flight. You will not discuss the purpose of your travel with anyone other then the carrier’s agents and representatives. Furthermore, you will not discuss with anyone rumors, speculation, or circumstances of the incident surrounding the soldiers’ death.

Upon arrival at your destination

- Upon arrival at your final destination, you will supervise the unloading of the remains. While on the tarmac, if you checked baggage, you may watch for your baggage to be unloaded and secure it at this time. Remember to render the hand salute as the remains are off loaded from the aircraft.

Proceed to the Cargo Terminal

- Proceed to the cargo terminal where you should be met by the receiving funeral director and possibly the CAO and family of the deceased. If no one meets you at the airport, you will contact the receiving funeral director and, if necessary, the receiving CAC for further instructions.

Inspecting the casket

Inspecting the Casket

- Before the funeral director assumes responsibility for the remains, you will remove the head envelope and burial permit from the shipping container and give them to the funeral director. You will assist the funeral director in removing the casket from the shipping container and then inspect the casket for any damages. If damages are noted, you will insure that they are annotated on the GBL (or freight invoice) that accompany the remains. The cargo representative should have the GBL (or freight invoice). Damage to the casket must also be noted on DA From 5329-R, Escort Report.

Traveling to the funeral home

- Before the casket is loaded into the hearse, you will drape the interment flag on the casket with the stars over the left shoulder of the remains. You will accompany the remains in the hearse to the receiving funeral home. If you have been authorized a rental car arrange to meet the funeral director before the hearse leaves the airport. You will follow the hearse to the receiving funeral home.

Inspecting the Casket at the funeral home.

- If the funeral director elects not to remove the casket from the shipping container before leaving the airport, do not drape the flag on the shipping container. Inspection of the casket for damage during shipping will be done at the funeral home.

Once at the funeral home

- Upon arrival at the receiving funeral home, you will remove the flag from the casket and re-inspect the casket for damage. Any damage will be noted on DA Form 5329-R. The funeral director will inspect the remains and complete Part II of DA Form 5329-R. You will inspect the uniform of the deceased to ensure that the uniform, brass and decorations are still correctly placed on the uniform. You will contact the receiving CAC first if you need instructions for the repair or replacement of the casket or additional preparation of the remains. If you cannot contact the receiving CAC, you may also contact CMAOC and ask for the on call Disposition Branch representative. Drape the interment flag on the casket in accordance with the guidance provided in DA Pam 638-2 Appendix C.

Sentimental personal effects

- When sentimental personal effects (PE) are shipped with the remains, you will receive a DA Form 54-R, (Record of Personal Effects). Ensure that the items on this form are in your possession or on the remains. You will hand carry the DA Form 54-R to the final destination. The CAC will contact the CAO to ensure he will be at the receiving funeral home to meet you and the remains upon arrival. When the receiving funeral director takes control of the remains ensure that the CAO witnesses the transfer of custody of the PE to the receiving funeral director and the receiving funeral director acknowledges receipts of the personal effects. This transfer is annotated on the DA Form 54-R.

Returning to duty station

- Once the remains arrive at the receiving funeral home, you are required to return to your duty station on the next reasonable flight. You may or may not stay overnight at the receiving funeral home location depending on the instructions provided on your TDY orders.

Keep track of your expenses

- Remember to keep a running itinerary from the time you left your duty station in Germany until you return to your duty station. Also, **when you mail your escort report, please return the copy of the GTR with the price of your ticket.**
- USA Mortuary, Landstuhl POC: Jeffrey L. Hayes Deputy Director DSN: 486-7072/7074 CIV: (06371) 86-7072/7074

Three things to remember

- Wear appropriate clothing – Army green class A uniform until the escort mission is completed.
- Complete DA Form 5329 (Escort Report)
- Follow the detailed instructions DA PAM 638-2 for the escort while en route and upon arrival at the place designated by the Person Authorized to Arrange Disposition.